



File Code: 1950
Date: April 6, 2018

Interested Reader:

Due to high public interest on the Ruby Mountains Oil and Gas Leasing Availability Analysis Project, the Forest Service (Mountain City, Ruby Mountains, Jarvis Ranger District) is offering an additional comment period to submit and resubmit comments to ensure that the public's comments are heard and considered.

The Forest Service is analyzing the impacts of making available for lease approximately 54,000 acres of National Forest System (NFS) land in the Ruby Mountains portion of the District. If made available, these lands may be proposed for oil and gas leasing by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in a future BLM lease sale. The Forest is conducting this analysis because we received a request from the BLM asking that we provide leasing concurrence on these specific lands. Enclosed is a map illustrating the location of the proposed lands. More detailed map(s) and a legal description of the lands are available upon request to the District office. This leasing analysis is an administrative decision and does not authorize any ground disturbance. If lands are made available for leasing by the Forest Service and leased through a future BLM lease sale, detailed environmental analysis would be conducted for any ground-disturbing proposal submitted by a future lessee.

This letter serves as an additional public comment period as provided for under the Forest Service's administrative review regulations at 36 CFR 218.5. This project is not authorized under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA); however it is subject to the Pre-decisional Administrative Review Process under 36 CFR §218 Subparts (A) and (B).

The lands are located north of Sherman Creek and south of Lamoille Creek within the Ruby Mountains, Elko County, Nevada. These lands are within areas covered by the 1986 Humboldt Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP), and all are designated as open to leasing.

This Project proposal is being analyzed in an environmental assessment (EA) as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Forest Service policy. To aid the Forest Service with the environmental analysis, we are accepting any input, recommendations and concerns you may have with this proposal. The Nevada Bureau of Land Management, Nevada Department of Wildlife, and Elko County are cooperating agencies on this project.

As part of the analysis, the Forest Service will decide if all or a portion of these NFS lands are available or are not available for leasing. For any lands made available, the Forest Service would need to identify reasonable and necessary stipulations that would be attached to the lease for a given legal description to avoid or minimize impacts to resources such as wildlife, soils, watersheds, roadless area characteristics and cultural resources. Stipulations are written to conform to the approved land use plans governing Forest Service management of resources in the area to be leased, and consistent with laws, regulations, policies, rules, and orders.



Written comments must be submitted to Josh Nicholes, Acting District Ranger, at 660 South 12th Street, Suite 108, Elko, Nevada 89801; or you may hand-deliver your comments during normal business hours from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays, to the above address.

E-mail comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc) to comments-intermtn-humboldt-toiyabe-mtncity@fs.fed.us. Please put "Ruby Oil and Gas" into the subject line.

Electronic comments can also be submitted using the project webpage at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=52443>. To submit comments using the web form, select "Comment/Object on Project" under "Get Connected" on the right panel of the project's webpage.

In cases where no identifiable name is attached to a comment, a verification of identity will be required for objection eligibility. If using an electronic message, a scanned signature is one way to provide verification.

The opportunity to comment ends on April 23, 2018. Those wishing to comment should not rely upon dates or time frame information provided by any other source. Only those who submit timely and specific written comments regarding the proposed project during a public comment period established by the responsible official are eligible to file an objection under 36 CFR §218.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this Project and will be available for public inspection and will be released if requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

For more information on this project please contact Josh Nicholes, Acting District Ranger, at (775) 778-6109. Project information can also be found on the project webpage at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=52443>.

Sincerely,



JOSHUA NICHOLLES
Acting District Ranger

Enclosure: Map of Analysis Area

